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ADDRESSES

AT

THE UNVEILING OF THE BUST

OF

MATT W. RANSOM

BY THE

NORTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

IN

THE ROTUNDA OF THE STATE CAPITOL
AT RALEIGH

Delivered in the Hall of the House of Representatives

JANUARY 11, 1911

The North Carolina Historical Commission

J. BRYAN GRIMES, *Chairman*,
Raleigh.

W. J. PEELE, Raleigh.

M. C. S. NOBLE, Chapel Hill.

D. H. HILL, Raleigh.

THOMAS W. BLOUNT, Roper.

R. D. W. CONNOR, *Secretary*,
Raleigh.

The Ransom Bust.

On March 5, 1910, the North Carolina Historical Commission received the following communication from Hon. R. W. Winston, of the Raleigh Bar:

March 4, 1910.

The North Carolina Historical Commission, Raleigh, N. C.

GENTLEMEN:—I am pleased to announce that I have in hand, or definitely promised, at least \$900.00, and possibly \$1,000.00, for the Ransom bust. You are, therefore, at liberty to contract for the same at this time.

For the guidance of the artist, I wish to say that General Ransom's hat measure was $7\frac{3}{8}$ inches on the inside. He was 6 feet tall, and weighed 180 pounds. The marked characteristic of General Ransom was dignity and courtliness. He dressed in an exquisite fashion. He studied the life and character of the old Roman senators. He was a classic scholar. He was as brave as a lion and yet as tender as a woman. Indeed, with women and children he was always a prime favorite. While he was a Confederate General, and a fighting one at that, he laid down his arms at Appomattox forever. After that time, he became a citizen of the entire Union. I think that the artist will be interested in knowing that General Ransom was a Union Whig before the war, and opposed to the war, but that when hostilities began, he was an active participant on behalf of the South. General Ransom was perhaps as handsome a man as ever sat in the Senate. There was an atmosphere about him which all people felt. He was the center of every group. He was chary of his presence. He stayed away from the multitude except when in action. His friends were the great men of the Union, and included Republicans as well as Democrats. He voted to pension General Grant's widow. He was an intimate friend of President Cleveland, and Mrs. Cleveland was exceedingly fond of him. On the whole, if I as an artist had the power to reproduce Senator Ransom in marble, I should select the grandest Roman senator that ever adorned the Forum, and would place Ransom's head on his body. Dignity, serenity, majesty and courtliness were his attributes.

Trusting that the above sketch may serve the artist,

Yours truly,

R. W. WINSTON.

At a meeting of the Historical Commission, held in the office of the Secretary of State at Raleigh, N. C., March 10, 1910, the above letter was read, and the fund offered for the erection of a bust to Senator Ransom was accepted. The contract for

the erection of the bust was accordingly made with Mr. Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl, at that time in Paris. The bust was delivered, and set up in its niche in December, 1910, and formally unveiled and presented to the State January 11, 1911, in the Hall of the House of Representatives at Raleigh, in the presence of the General Assembly of North Carolina, the members of Senator Ransom's family, and a large audience. The ceremonies of the occasion consisted of the addresses printed in this bulletin.

R. D. W. CONNOR,

Secretary of the North Carolina Historical Commission.

Introductory Address.

BY J. BRYAN GRIMES

Chairman of the North Carolina Historical Commission.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The State Historical Commission has invited you to join in celebrating an important event in the historical activities of the State.

It has long been a reproach to North Carolinians that we have been careless of the memories of our great men. As a State, we have always been poor, but we have been rich in men—high-minded men, who knew how to do and die if necessary, in the crises that confronted them.

We have been proud of our State, proud of her achievements and her traditions. We have gloried in hearth-stone tales of former generations, only to forget them in the busy struggles of life. We have written little and preserved even less, largely because we had no depositories for the safe keeping of our records. We are the beneficiaries of the constructive statesmanship of the past, but in many cases the bodies of those devoted spirits whose deeds should be a glorious heritage to our people lie in unknown graves, their fame consigned to oblivion, their services unrecorded.

We, in our generation, have been following the example of past generations who have forgotten, to be in turn forgotten. But a change is now coming over the spirit of our people.

The State is beginning to realize that conserving the fair renown of her own great sons is her sacred duty.

The North Carolina Historical Commission was created in 1903, and its duties and powers greatly enlarged in 1907. The work of the Historical Commission has not been confined to the duties required of it by the law creating it, but in the last two years its activities have been varied. It has classified,

arranged and filed the executive letters of thirty governors, beginning with Governor Caswell in 1777, and ending with Governor Vance in 1879. There are 14,754 of these letters and documents, and now, for the first time, these manuscripts are available to students of North Carolina history.

The Historical Commission has also secured in the past two years ten fine private collections of valuable manuscripts, embracing nearly 12,000 documents of the highest value and importance.

It has had many items concerning North Carolina's colonial history copied from newspapers of other States.

It has issued ten publications, which have been in great demand in many of the States of the Union.

It has, through the enterprise of its Secretary, secured as a gift to the State from the Italian Government, a fine plaster replica of Canova's famous statue of Washington, made from the original model in the Canova Museum at Possagno, Italy. It will be remembered that the original was made by Canova for the State in 1820 and was destroyed when the capitol was burned in 1831. The replica can be seen in the rotunda. It is hoped that the General Assembly will soon have this statue reproduced in marble.

A notable feature of the work of the Historical Commission has been the information about North Carolina furnished to visiting historians, students and original investigators from nearly half the States of the Union and some foreign countries.

The growth of interest in North Carolina historical matters by the people of the State, even in the past two years, has been remarkable and probably the greatest work of the Historical Commission has been done in the thousands of letters of correspondence with our own people about the history of the State.

The Secretary of the Historical Commission has prepared three publications for the aid of teachers of North Carolina history in the annual celebration of North Carolina Day in

the public schools, and thousands of these have been used in the schools of the State.

The State is now not only preserving the records of her great deeds, but is, though tardily, following the example of other States and great peoples, by placing in our capitol marble busts that posterity may become familiar with the features of our great men. We have been slow, proverbially slow to move, but the movement has begun, and there is now no uncertainty as to results.

One year ago we gathered here to inaugurate a new movement in North Carolina, and invited you to witness the unveiling of a marble bust to that great Carolinian, William A. Graham. Since that time the Historical Commission has been assured of the presentation to the State in the near future of busts of Governor Samuel Johnston, Chief Justice Thomas Ruffin, Calvin H. Wiley, and another which we are yet unauthorized to announce.

This evening we have met to unveil a bust of Matt W. Ransom, carved by that talented artist, F. W. Ruckstuhl.

Among those most responsible for the erection of this bust is Robert W. Winston. Judge Winston is himself an able jurist, scholar and orator, and his subject is an inspiration to all ambitious, patriotic North Carolinians. He will speak to you of the "Life and Character of Matt W. Ransom." He brings to his task an ability and scholarship worthy of his theme. Let us hear him.

Matt Whitaker Ransom

BY ROBERT W. WINSTON.

Cicero, consulting the god at Delphi how he should attain the most glory, the Pythoness answered, "By making your own genius and not the opinion of the people the guide of your life."

These words of Plutarch made an abiding impression upon Ransom when he was but a youth, and they found abundant fruitage in his subsequent life and conduct. In 1892 when a committee from that all-powerful organization, the Farmers' Alliance, waited upon the Senator with a request to sign the "Alliance Demands," embracing Free Silver at the ratio of 16 to 1 and warehouse receipts for cotton, corn and tobacco as a medium of exchange, his reply took this form: said he, "Once upon a time, a dispute arose in Warren County as to which was the most desirable of all virtues, and the disputants, being unable to agree, decided to submit the question to my grandfather, and his answer was this: 'The most desirable of all virtues is courage, courage without which no other virtue can be fully exercised, and with which every other virtue can be fostered.'" This courageous refusal of Senator Ransom to yield to the demands of the Farmers' Alliance may or may not have been one cause of the downfall of his party and the consequent loss of his seat in the Senate, but it assuredly gave Senator Ransom a secure place among civil heroes.

The people of North Carolina are fond of associating together the names of her great contemporary Senators, Vance and Ransom, and yet no two men were more dissimilar. Vance was a democrat. Ransom was an aristocrat. The name of Vance brings before our mind's eye a War Governor—a Moses, if you please, leading his people through the horrors of war and the wilderness of reconstruc-

tion, with vast crowds of people applauding his homely anecdote and his ridicule—Vance foremost in the hearts of his people. With the name of Ransom we associate senatorial dignity and the very best exponent of a reunited country. Ransom was without doubt the most truly national Democrat that has crossed the Potomac since 1860 to occupy a seat in the United States Senate. With him love of the Union was a consuming passion. When not yet thirty years of age, delivering the literary address at the University of North Carolina, and choosing as his theme “Dismemberment of the Union,” he poured out his heart for the cause of the Union and in denunciation of Secession in these burning words: “Dismemberment would overthrow the Union and leave nothing but shame above its ruins; it would draw a ruthless line across the Republic, although it passed over the grave of Washington and divided the ashes of the great Father of our country. With what plea can disunion appear before the bar of this world, or the throne of another? It proposes as a remedy for evils, an evil before which all others sink into insignificance; it suggests as a measure of honor an act which would cover the American name with dishonor as long as the earth remains—it holds up before us the bloody mantle of liberty, pierced with a thousand deadly wounds, and tells us that is the way to preserve freedom—it shows us the temple of self-government wrapped in flames, and all that is valuable burning in the conflagration, and does not, and can not, point to one benefit conferred, one grievance redressed, one right restored by the awful sacrifice; it is that spirit which would have the beautiful heavens with their rolling worlds of light, and the great central sun, around which all in harmony revolve, hurled into chaos and darkness because the little planet of Vesta, or some straggling comet happened to wander from its sphere. * * *

Disunion will be the tomb in which all, all are buried, a tomb of ashes and infamy, ‘in which dismal vaults in black

secession open' on 'sights of woe, regions of horror, doleful shades—without end.' ”

These are brave words, and they accurately expressed the sentiment of a great majority of the people of North Carolina till Mr. Lincoln made his call for troops. What course such men as Ransom would have pursued had President Lincoln not made this call one can but conjecture. Union men in the South have ever been of the opinion that this action of the President was a great blunder, and that it solidified the entire South, driving Virginia and North Carolina into the new Confederacy. No doubt it did, but what other course could President Lincoln have pursued and preserved the Union? Had he waited for the minds of men to grow calm, his waiting would have been in vain and the Southern Confederacy unmolested—and grown into a *de facto* government and an accomplished fact—England, no doubt, would have recognized the new nation. Be this as it may, the fall of Fort Sumter and the call for North Carolina to furnish her quota of troops to invade South Carolina totally changed the aspect of affairs. All over the State courageous and patriotic men had been loudly pleading the cause of the Union. At that very time a union and peace assemblage had gathered in Wilkesboro and earnest men were making stirring appeals for the old flag. Vance, now fast growing to be the popular idol, was in the very act of imploring the God of Nations to avert the awful catastrophe of civil war, and had both hands uplifted to High Heaven, when suddenly some one in the crowd read the telegram announcing the capture of Fort Sumter and Mr. Lincoln's call for troops. In describing the scene thereafter, Governor Vance said, “When these hands of mine were lowered, they fell by the side of a secessionist.”

Matt Whitaker Ransom was born in Warren County, North Carolina, October 6, 1826, and lived to be seventy-eight years of age to the very day, dying October 6, 1904. On his father's side he came of good English stock, and on

his mother's side he was connected with the leaders of thought and with the strong men of Eastern Carolina. His grand-uncle, Nathaniel Macon, as was the custom with aspiring young men of that day, had been educated at Princeton, but our own University, under the wise management of Caldwell and Swain, was now beginning to take its place securely among the first colleges of the country, and so in January, 1844, young Matt Ransom, an impecunious youth of eighteen years, with no fortune save a brave heart and a noble ambition, entered our University at Chapel Hill. His college career was highly distinguished, indeed most honorable to him. He was not only a leader among the students, but he deserved to lead them, for he was temperate in his habits, diligent in his studies, and the most prompt and faithful young man in the institution. One incident in his college life emphasizes his faithfulness to duty. In 1844 Henry Clay, that idol of the Whig party, made his famous address in Raleigh, and people from far and near, especially loyal and enthusiastic Whigs, gathered to do him homage. Young Ransom, a student at Chapel Hill, and himself a dashing young Whig, remained away because he could not afford to neglect a single duty. Dr. Battle informs us that Ransom was the only member of his class who, during the entire college course, punctually attended the required five thousand exercises, consisting of prayers in the chapel, church on Sunday, and recitations during the week.

Mr. Ransom had as his rival in college a man whose splendid presence, noble ancestry, cultured mind, lofty and well-trained ambition, and whose early and tragic death has incarnated him in the minds and hearts of true Carolinians as one of our heroes and martyrs—General James Johnston Pettigrew, who gave up his life at Falling Waters. Pettigrew excelled Ransom in mathematics. In all other studies Ransom was his equal. When these young rivals graduated, James K. Polk, President of the United States, and himself a graduate of the University, honored the occasion with his

presence. Reporters of the *New York Herald* and other papers, after hearing the various addresses delivered from the rostrum, accorded the honors of the commencement occasion to young Matt Ransom, whose salutatory address is said to have been one of the best ever heard from a college student. A few years afterwards when Ransom, then Attorney-General of North Carolina, and the youngest man who has filled the position, returned to his University to make the commencement address, he expressed his sense of gratitude to one of the literary societies which had made his education possible, furnishing him the means of defraying his college expenses.

After graduating, young Ransom returned to Warren County and began the practice of the law. His success as a lawyer was almost instantaneous, and as an advocate, especially when the issue was one of life or death, he was quite without a peer. Of him B. F. Moore, the Nestor of the North Carolina Bar, remarked that he had an intellect of great strength and clearness, and that if he would but apply himself to the study of the law, no man would be his fellow. As a college student he had appreciated the Greek and Roman classics, and had sought to model his style after the orations of Cicero and Demosthenes, enriching his discourses by referring to the deeds and the sayings of the early philosophers and statesmen. Among modern orators, Mr. Webster was his model. There is a dignity, a majesty, an irresistible sweep about Webster's style that must always impress the true artist. Its influence upon Senator Ransom's oratory may be seen in every line he spoke or wrote.

It is little wonder that such a man as this soon grew in the confidence of the people, and that when little more than a boy he was named as a Scott and Graham Presidential elector and made a canvass of his district and of other parts of the State, which added to his already growing fame. As a lawyer, Ransom would go whenever duty called. Danger did not deter him. Fear was unknown to him. When the great English advocate, defending Queen Caroline against

the unjust attacks of King George, was admonished by friends that his line of defense might overthrow the kingdom, he replied that he would continue to do his duty by his client, and his full duty, even if thereby the kingdom of Great Britain was destroyed. This is the type of lawyer and of man that young Matt Ransom was growing to be. Men may differ as to his place in history, but all will agree that he was ever loyal to his friends, his clients and his country, and that he did not spare himself or count the cost when their interests were at stake.

Soon after his canvass as a Whig elector, he was chosen by a Democratic Legislature, although he himself was a Whig, Attorney-General of the State of North Carolina. No doubt his record as a student and his recent brilliant canvass were the causes of this early promotion. But the law was irksome to him, and far too technical and exacting. He loved to till the soil and commune with nature. Like Washington and Jefferson and Nathaniel Macon, he took a larger view of things than the life of a lawyer afforded, and dealt with mankind as a whole, mankind struggling upward towards liberty and light. Like many another leader of thought, he studied law for the training of his mind, but practically abandoned it as a web of tangled precedents. Whatever his views, he shortly resigned the office of Attorney-General of North Carolina and removed to his wife's estate in Northampton County.

Loving the Union, hating secession, and favoring internal improvements, Ransom naturally allied himself with the Whig party, the party of his ancestors. But this militant old party was fast nearing its end. What with espousing Know-nothingism and Anti-Catholicism it had fallen from its high estate, and was now becoming local and sectional. A man of the type of Matt Ransom could follow it no longer. He was himself the most catholic of mortals. He ever saw things in the large. With him a State was a small affair. It was the nation, the united, indissoluble nation, the nation

from Maine to Mexico and from the Atlantic to the Pacific—the hope of the oppressed of the entire universe, the country which was working out the problem of self-government and making an abiding place for liberty, this it was that engaged his best thought and animated his soul. Thousands of other true men remained loyal to the Whig party until it was crushed to death between the upper and nether millstones of fiery and unyielding Democracy—secession, on the one side, if you will, and the persistent and fanatical Abolition party on the other. Such men as Graham, and Badger, and Morehead, and Vance were of this number, and they voted till the very last for Bell and Everett, dreading and sincerely dreading that the Democratic party under Toombs and Yancey and Rhett would join hands with the Abolitionists of the North and precipitate war. With such as these, whether Roderigo killed Cassio or Cassio killed Roderigo, 'twas their gain. In 1852, for the reasons above assigned, Mr. Ransom severed his connection with the Whig party and became a Democrat, but not a War Democrat. Far from it. We delight to contemplate this young Carolinian during the period from 1850 to 1860. On January 19, 1853, he was happily married to Martha E. Exum, and an interesting family of children was growing up about him. He was honored and respected by the people of North Carolina. Twice he served Northampton County in the General Assembly. He was pulsating with high ambition and an earnest desire to serve his country and keep her in the paths of peace, and withal, he was as contented a man as one of his temperament could be. But Mr. Ransom was never a social man, nor a jovial man. He did not keep open house, and his Northampton home was modest almost to plainness. He had few friends. When in Washington he lived alone, his family remaining in North Carolina, his apartments at the old Metropolitan being simple yet dignified. He rather tolerated than loved the populace, and he knew that they

did not love him. He cracked no jokes with them. When in a crowd he was manifestly restless and nervous and did all the talking himself. To mingle with the people was an effort to him, but he was cordial, polite, majestic in manner; Chesterfield surely not more so. Ransom indeed had the same characteristic with Jefferson, seriousness of purpose. "Great minds," says Aristotle, "are always of a nature originally melancholy." Ransom was in a sense a solitary man. A few strong friends in each town in North Carolina he grappled to his heart with hoops of steel. These men he loved and trusted, and called affectionately by their Christian names. All night long he would talk with them, and advise them, and encourage them. But as for the average man, he counted but little in Ransom's affections.

Vast problems confronted the Southern man in the 50's—slavery, secession, the compromise measures, war. It was said on one side, "This republic can not endure half slave and half free," and on the other side it was said, "I will call the roll of my slaves from Bunker Hill monument." Mr. Clay thought that he had settled the question of slavery for all time by his Missouri Compromise, and if Mr. Clay had never sought the Presidency, it is within the range of reason that he would in his fertile brain have found a way out, but when Mr. Clay stood for the Presidency he must trim his sails to meet the requirements of the campaign, and it was dangerous for him to advocate even gradual abolition; and so the slavery question was one which would not stay fixed. The escape of fugitive slaves to free territory, their capture and return, the admission of new States into the Union and whether their constitution should be "free" or "slave," wordy conflicts in Congress and personal encounters between the champions of these contending forces, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and other excitable fiction, the Dred Scott Decision and fire-eating speeches and editorials *pro* and *con*, were constant and increasing sources of irritation. At his home near the banks of the Roanoke, these stirring events were passing in

panoramic review before Mr. Ransom's eye. In his heart he despised the extremists of both sides. The appeal to a higher law than the Constitution to abolish slavery smote on his ear like a fire bell in the night. The assertion that the Constitution of our country was a league with the devil and a covenant with hell he resented with all the bitterness of his nature, but he likewise knew that you could not repeal the great compromise measures affecting slavery and open up the new States to the admission of slaves without a great struggle, ending perhaps in civil war and running counter to the moral sense of the world, and above all Ransom and other old line Whigs, and some Democrats as well, knew that sooner or later slavery had to go. The civilized world was against it. England had gotten rid of her last slave territory, and no civilized nation sanctioned slavery in its constitution.

One of the finest spectacles this world has seen, or will see, is the conduct of Robert E. Lee, Matt W. Ransom, and other men who loved the Union with all the intensity of their nature, when the time for fighting was at hand. It was not their war. They were against it. Governor Graham had raised his all-powerful voice throughout this State for the Union and the old flag. "Let's fight out our rights within the Union" was their plea. But not so with the extremists. I make little doubt that Chandler, Wendell Phillips and Garrison were as much pleased when war was upon us as were Toombs, Yancey and Rhett. The former would have dissolved the Union to rid the northern half of this dismembered country of slavery; the latter would have dissolved the Union to retain slavery in the southern half. But when war actually came, Ransom and other peace men went to the front, fought bravely and made no complaints. "If we must fight," said they, "we will fight strangers. We will not fight our brothers and neighbors." Such conduct is an attribute of very high virtue, and it is the foundation stone upon which the men of the South are this day laying broad

and deep a civilization most attractive and enduring. Ransom was opposed to slavery and favored its gradual abolition. Our Constitution might have guaranteed slavery in its every line, but this would not have prevented its downfall. It was never meant that one human being should have, hold, own and possess another human being, and when you grant that the negro is a human being, the case against slavery is made out.

The attitude of Matt W. Ransom towards slavery and his conduct in the war which followed, mark him as a distinct type of the Southern man of his day. Disinterested, unselfish, brave, true to his convictions, and yet truer to his neighbors, his friends and his people—with men of this sort blood is ever thicker than water. He thought that the war was useless and a crime. He thought that it could be averted, and like other men whose reasons were not dethroned by their hates and passions, he knew that the South, brave and courageous though she was, could not stand up and fight the North, backed by the moral and financial support of the entire world. Vainly he hoped to avert civil war and its horrors. A student of Roman history, he knew what it meant for brother to contend against brother in mortal combat. He knew the unhappy condition of every country afflicted with civil war. He knew the story of Marius and Sulla, of Pompey and Cæsar, of Charles I and Cromwell, and therefore, as a member of the Legislature from Northampton County in 1861, he was most active in securing the passage of a bill creating a Peace Commission, with instructions to repair to the capital of the new Confederacy and to restore the relations of the seceding States to the Union. Three distinguished North Carolinians constituted the Montgomery Peace Commission. The Chairman of the Commission was David L. Swain, President of our University, the other members being Matt W. Ransom, of Northampton, and John L. Bridgers, of Edgecombe. Governor Swain was a pronounced Union man, while Colonel Bridgers

was a War Democrat. These men at once repaired to Montgomery in pursuance of the resolution of the General Assembly, but their task was a vain one. The war spirit was all-pervading. Abram W. Venable was going to wipe up all the blood spilt in the war with his silk handkerchief. One infatuated Southern man was thoroughly convinced that he could whip a dozen Yankees, and in the early battles of the war some of our boys actually cautioned their comrades to "walk easy" or they would "scare the Yankees away before they could get a shot." Our North Carolina Peace Commission found the new capital of the Confederacy aflame with martial music, with marching troops, with officers in gorgeous uniforms, bearing new epaulettes, and with the flashing eyes of thoughtless but beautiful women, and the whole scene dominated by that high, unconquerable spirit of the man of the South who counts not the odds. What could withstand these? But their glitter little moved Matt W. Ransom. He was a peace man in Raleigh and he was a peace man in Montgomery. Sadly he wrote his wife from this latter city that the war spirit was running high, that men had lost their reason, and, he added, that his own associates were doing little to assist him to check the rapid march to destruction. The mission proved a failure, and on the 11th of February, 1861, the Commission made its report to the Legislature of North Carolina, declaring that nothing could be accomplished. Events followed each other with great rapidity. On the 14th of April, 1861, Fort Sumter fell. On the 15th of April, 1861, President Lincoln made his call for troops. Governor Ellis firmly and disdainfully replied that North Carolina would furnish no troops to coerce her Southern brethren, and at once called the General Assembly to meet in extraordinary session in the city of Raleigh on May 1, 1861. Pursuant to the call, the Legislature convened upon the appointed day and issued a call for a convention of the people and for the assembling of 20,000 volunteers.

This call for volunteers had scarcely been made when Matt W. Ransom, the member from Northampton County, resigned his seat, volunteered as a private soldier in the ranks, bade farewell to these historic halls and went forth to defend his native State. On the 8th of May, 1861, he was commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel of the First Regiment of Infantry, and from this date until April 9, 1865, when Appomattox put an end to Southern hopes, wherever duty called, or danger was the thickest, this brave man could always be found.

Of General Ransom as a soldier I shall say but little. His record is too well known to require any extended comment. Suffice it to say that he rose by merit from Lieutenant-Colonel to Major-General in Lee's army; that he participated in the battles of Seven Pines, Malvern Hill, Sharpsburg, Boone's Mill, Suffolk, Plymouth, Drewry's Bluff, Fort Steadman, Five Forks, and other battles around Petersburg; that he was wounded at Malvern Hill, and desperately wounded at Drewry's Bluff; that when he was promoted to be Colonel of the Thirty-fifth Regiment, the officers of his old command presented him with a handsome sword as a token of their love and admiration; that his brigade was often commended for bravery in the reports of his ranking officers; that the Legislature of North Carolina and the Confederate Congress each passed votes of thanks to Commander Cook, of the Ram "Albemarle," and to General Hoke and General Ransom and the officers and men of their respective commands for the brilliant victory at Plymouth, and that more precious than all else, Ransom's brigades so conducted themselves in battle and under the eye of Robert E. Lee, a man greater in defeat than the greatest of his victors, as to secure his coveted meed of praise—"Ransom's two brigades behaved most handsomely," Lee reported—and that when the curtain fell on this four years' drama of carnage, at Appomattox Ransom surrendered 41 officers and 391 enlisted men. General Ransom could never have made such a soldier as Stonewall Jackson. To attain supreme excel-

lence in any department of human endeavor, one must know and love every detail of his work. To be a great soldier one must appreciate the value of the drill. Indeed, it is an absolute necessity. He must understand that an army must be trained until it moves with one will, with one purpose, and almost as one man. Stonewall Jackson knew this. In the cold winter of 1862, in the bleak mountains of Northern Virginia, at Romney, Jackson trained and drilled his men till they all but froze and mutinied, when the stern Puritan, sore and hurt by their conduct, promptly tendered his resignation.

At Aquia Creek, in 1891, General Ransom wrote to his wife that "the stupid drill was very irksome, and that such things engaged small minds very anxiously, and that he did not take the field for this." The strength and the weakness of the average Southern army consisted in the individual valor and initiative of each officer and each private, while little attention was paid to the training and military manœuvres of companies, regiments and brigades. Colonel Henderson, of the English Army, in his life of Stonewall Jackson, often refers to this fact. The result was practically an army of "stars"—a Mettus Curtius and an Horatius without number could be found enlisted under the "Stars and Bars," and Ransom was one of them. Observe him at Five Forks. We can see him now, superb of figure, six feet tall, handsome as a prince, proud as Lucifer, picturesque as J. E. B. Stuart, brave as Jubal Early, splendidly attired, astride his thoroughbred stallion—his favorite charger, "Ion." The battle is on. Philip H. Sheridan is commanding 25,000 well-equipped men and stands for the cause of the North. George Pickett is commanding 7,000 half-ragged and half-starved Confederates, and he, together with his division commanders, Fitz. Lee and Matt W. Ransom, stand for the cause of the South. General Sheridan executes a flank movement to cut off the Confederates from their army at Petersburg. It is between four and five

o'clock before the Union forces advance under Warren. General Sheridan complains of the delay of his subordinate and relieves him of his command. Warren's corps finally advances through the undefended lines on the left of the Confederates, getting completely in their rear. Sheridan begins his attack with Ayers' Division on Ransom's extreme left, held by the Twenty-fourth Regiment. At first the enemy are resisted and several distinct charges are repulsed, but finally Griffin's Federal Division appears on the scene and it is followed by Crawford's. The thin gray line of the Confederacy is swept away, and the Fifty-sixth, Twenty-fifth, Forty-ninth and Thirty-fifth Regiments are driven from their works. They form from time to time new lines of battle, entirely ignorant that the enemy have flanked them and are attacking Pickett in the rear with an overwhelming force. General Ransom conceives it his duty to make one final charge to break through the enveloping lines. One horse has been killed under him. Calling on his brigade to follow him, bareheaded, Ransom leads his brigade for the last time in a charge against the enemy. He emerges from the woods and is in front of his advancing line; the enemy open fire. The smoke clears away and rider and horse are discovered prone upon the ground. The cry runs down the line that the General is shot and men rush to save him from capture. It is even repeated in the Federal Army that Ransom has been killed, and a message to this effect is wired to Major-General Thomas, a kinsman of General Ransom. Suddenly Captain Johnson, of the Thirty-fifth, and Captain Sherrill, of the Twenty-ninth Regiments, rush forward and find General Ransom pinioned under his horse and in danger of being crushed in the dying struggles of the noble animal. The enemy has now closed in on both flanks and on the front, and there is no hope of assistance, and yet there is no thought of surrender. Under the darkness of the approaching night, General Ransom and the remnant of his men fall back through the small loop-hole left, emptying into the enemy's

face their last cartridge. During the night, General Ransom with his remaining troops unites with General Anderson's corps, and together with Fitzhugh Lee and Barringer's brigade, heroically oppose the enemy's advance and slowly fall back within their own lines.*

When General Ransom surrendered at Appomattox it was a complete surrender with no mental reservations. He had made a good fight and had not won, but he could at least deserve success. Noble were our Southern boys on the field of battle, but how much nobler in defeat! Lee showed us our duty, and Ransom followed the leadership of the great chieftain. Our duty was to remain quietly at home, obey the laws of the United States Government, and preserve an Anglo-Saxon civilization. After Appomattox came poverty, desolated farms, and decimated families, the Freedman's Bureau, carpet-baggers, the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, many of our wise leaders disfranchised, and the ballot in the hands of our late slaves. To these great changes we of the South had to conform our civilization. How well we have done let even our former enemies now attest. During these exciting scenes, during the process of readjustment and rehabilitation, of becoming a portion of the Union once more, it is not invidious to say of General Ransom that North Carolina turned to him with as much confidence as to any of her noble sons, and she turned not in vain. What was accomplished by the conservative advisers and leaders after the Civil War has made possible the almost uniform reign of law, order and good feeling which has since prevailed in North Carolina, giving her the deserved reputation of being perhaps the most law-abiding State south of the Potomac.

After the close of the war, General Ransom again took up the thread of life, engaging both in the practice of the law and the tilling of the soil. During the next few years he mingled but little in politics, but he was not leading a use-

* Description of Battle of Five Forks, taken largely from Col. W. H. S. Burgwyn's Address on Gen. Ransom.

less or self-sufficient life. Eighteen hundred and sixty-eight, sixty-nine and seventy were dark days for North Carolina. This was the embryo state of her existence under the new order of things. What should North Carolina be and what could she do? Unwise schoolma'ms from the North, over-zealous Abolitionists, and carpet-baggers were putting strange and wrong notions in the heads of our late slaves. The Legislature was dominated by the worst element of both whites and blacks, and bankrupted the State. Many of our best men, who had participated in the late war, were not allowed to vote. Petty stealings and burnings were frequent; the courts, now presided over for the most part by incompetent judges, either in sympathy with negro criminals or hostile to the old-time white man, refused to punish crime at all or punished it inadequately. In the Eastern counties the polls were literally surrounded by negroes, so that often many decent white men who could vote were unwilling to make the effort, women were in terror, and chaos was imminent. The white people organized to regulate matters, and the Ku-Klux Klan came into existence.

Governor Holden retaliated by proclaiming martial law in the counties of Alamance and Caswell. Adolphus G. Moore, Esq., was arrested by Colonel George W. Kirk upon the charge of belonging to the Ku-Klux Klan and for complicity in the murder of J. W. Stevens, of Yanceyville. The prisoner's attorneys, A. S. Merrimon and E. S. Parker, sued out a writ of *habeas corpus* before Chief Justice Pearson. To the demand of the officer of the law for the delivery of the prisoner under the great writ of the State, Colonel Kirk made this reply, "Tell your judge that such things have played out. My orders come from the Governor, and I will obey none others." Upon reading the return of the officer, Judge Pearson directs the Marshal of the Supreme Court to exhibit the writ to Governor Holden and to say to him that he had no power to disobey the writ of *habeas corpus*. The pity of it is that our great Chief Justice further added that if the

Executive does disobey the writ, the power of the Judiciary is exhausted and the responsibility must rest with the Governor. Holden refuses to honor the writ, and sets forth his reasons for so doing at great length. Nothing now remains but the trial of Mr. Moore by a drum-head court martial; but not so. Graham, Badger, B. F. Moore and Judge Battle, and his two sons, Kemp P. and Richard H., hold a conference in the city of Raleigh to consider this weighty matter. The minds of all of them instinctively turn to General Ransom on his Northampton farm. They telegraph him to come to Raleigh. A conference is held, and Ransom suggests that the rights of the prisoner are protected by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which had but lately been ratified. Armed with the petition for the writ of *habeas corpus*, signed by Josiah Turner, and also with a copy of this new amendment to the Constitution, which assuredly had not been intentionally passed for the purposes to which it was now to be put, Ransom hastens to Elizabeth City, the home of George W. Brooks, District Judge of the United States. For several days and nights General Ransom and Judge Brooks discuss the matter and construe the new amendment. The writ is finally granted and is made returnable at Salisbury. The court convenes. The prisoner is brought into court by military escort under the command of Colonel Kirk. The brave judge looks up from the bench, and observing these minions of a tyrannical and self-sufficient government in his court of justice, indignantly orders them out, discharges the prisoner, and taxes the costs of the entire proceeding against George W. Kirk. This brave act of Judge Brooks will be handed down in story and in song till the latest syllable of recorded time. He was not a profound judge, but he was an incorruptible one, and he was as firm as he was honest.

In 1870 Z. B. Vance was elected to the United States Senate. He was refused his seat by that body. Ransom was chosen by the succeeding Legislature to fill the position,

and took his seat on April 23, 1872. When Senator Ransom had taken the oath of office, Senator Thurman, from his place in the Senate, arose and said: "I take the liberty of expressing the satisfaction that I am sure all of you feel that now, for the first time since 1861, every seat in this body is filled, every State is represented. I think it is a matter that the country and the Senate may congratulate itself upon."

We have considered Matt W. Ransom as a lawyer and soldier, and somewhat as an orator, but we have not yet considered him in that forum which he graced and adorned for so great a length of time, and where he did his best work, as a Senator of the United States. During a quarter of a century, save two years, he was North Carolina's senior Senator, and no State ever had a more faithful or efficient public servant. The first words spoken by him in a set speech in that august assemblage furnished the key to his after life and conduct. It was February 17, 1875, and the South and its attitude to and treatment of the negro was under consideration. Feeling was running high in the Senate when General Ransom arose and said: "For nearly three years I have sat silently in this chamber, with the hope that by pursuing a course, as I thought, of impartial and patriotic duty toward all and every part of the country, I might have some influence in satisfying Northern Senators that the South desired peace with the North and a restored and fraternal Union of all the States of the Republic." He had sat in the Senate three years silent. He had heard his State and his section of our country abused unjustly. He could remain silent no longer, and his great speech made its impress upon our distracted nation and enriched the literature of the times.

He continued to pursue the course which he had adopted—one of silence—on all occasions, except now and then to pay a tribute to some dead Senator, or to utter a few sentences in a running debate. He knew full well that an acrimonious debate defeated its very purpose. It rekindled

fires of sectional hate. It convinced no one, and it proved nothing. Even when the great Ben Hill made his famous reply to Mr. Blaine's attack, can any one declare that at the time more good than harm was thereby accomplished? And so Senator Ransom continued in his quiet way to do his full duty, upon the committees and around the conference table. When it was proposed that Mrs. Grant, widow of General Grant, receive a pension, Ransom voted for the measure and against his party associates. When General Burnside passed away, General Ransom paid a handsome tribute to his memory. His relations with the great Senators of our entire country, of both political parties, were always kind, and with many of them cordial and affectionate. Edmunds and Thurman, Conkling and Gorman, and Lamar and Bayard were his close friends and admirers. These Senators had heard his earnest appeal for the South, and his devout prayer that all sections of our common country should bury their anger, that speech of so much sincerity, worth and earnestness from which I have just quoted. They had seen him at the conclusion of that great speech of eight hours duration, carried bodily from the Senate chamber, exhausted by the exertions which he had undergone, and each and all knew that there was not a Senator in that chamber who would risk more or go further to give peace and quiet once more to our distracted country.

And the supreme test often came to Ransom. It came in 1876. Tilden had been elected President of the United States. Nearly all candid men conceded it. The South demanded that he be seated at all hazards, even at the price of another fratricidal strife if need be. But Senator Ransom saw it otherwise. He rarely made mistakes upon great questions. He had a cool head, a great fund of common sense, and an intuitive knowledge of the right and wrong of weighty matters. He and other conservative men of the South determined, therefore, to settle this vexed question by arbitration and not by force. And Senator Ransom concluded to do this

though, doubtless, it would cost him his seat in the Senate. None knew better than Senator Ransom that North Carolina would never forgive the man who ran up the white flag in the face of the enemy, no matter how imminent the danger. Under a resolution of Proctor Knott, a committee of five was appointed, who, in conjunction with seven from the Senate, should consider the whole question of the presidential election and of the disputed votes in the Electoral College, and who should recommend to Congress a course to be followed. The Senate committee consisted of Edmunds of Vermont, Morton of Indiana, Conkling of New York, Frelinghuysen of New Jersey, Thurman of Ohio, Bayard of Delaware, and Ransom of North Carolina.

The labors of this commission were very great, but the ridicule heaped upon the entire scheme by the extremists of both sections was even greater. Their labors extended over many weeks and they were called upon to consider every conceivable device for choosing the commission to whom this matter should finally be left for arbitrament. At one time it was suggested that the Supreme Court of the United States be requested to pass upon the matter. The great question at issue was who should constitute the fifteenth man and cast the deciding vote. It was seriously considered that he be chosen by lot. It was at one time suggested that the fifteenth arbitrator be called from some other country. Lord Dufferin, who then happened to be in Canada, was humorously suggested. The bravery of this thing consisted in this, that Ransom and his Democratic colleagues from the South, even after they feared that they were not going to get a square deal in selecting the board of arbitrators, turned not back, but continued until the very end. Only a brave man is willing to lose when in losing he destroys himself and thereby saves his country. Such men were Ransom and Bayard and Thurman. And well they were, for a second civil war, following hard on the heels of the last one, would have been one too many. As finally constituted, the Elec-

toral Commission consisted of five on the part of the Senate, five on the part of the House, and five Judges from the Supreme Court. Judge David Davis was to have been the fifteenth man, but he was unfortunately called from the Supreme Court Bench to the United States Senate and was thereby rendered ineligible. As a last resort, Justice Bradley, of New York, was chosen to fill the unenviable position of the fifteenth man; he whose vote always made eight count one more than seven. Senator Ransom lost his President, but he helped to save his country.

In the life of Washington City, Senator Ransom was a prime factor; not that he went into Washington society, but the wives and daughters and families of Senators who spent their winters at the capital, and such women as Mrs. Cleveland, and others, were quite overcome by the elegance of his manner and the graciousness of his demeanor. It was said indeed that Mrs. Cleveland could not believe her ears when she heard that Senator Ransom was not supporting her husband, in 1892, for the Presidency. She little knew the violent opposition to him in North Carolina at that time, and how good men were actually charging that President Cleveland had been purchased, literally bought, by the gold syndicate. Mrs. Cleveland doubtless thought better of our State when in June, 1908, she received from that greatest of Democratic State Conventions in Charlotte a telegram of love and confidence on the death of her great husband. The next time Ransom met President Cleveland after the convention of 1892, at which North Carolina had deserted the "Old Man" for David B. Hill, and his likes, he remarked, "Mr. President, I made two mistakes last fall. My first mistake was in holding my cotton too long, and my second mistake was in voting against you."

In keeping with his duty to the whole nation, Senator Ransom early conceived the idea that the capital of our country ought to be greatly improved, that the Potomac flats should be reclaimed and new parks provided, and he determined

that Washington City should have further assistance at the hands of the national government in its beautification and adornment. To this end, on the 13th day of December, 1881, he offered a resolution raising a select committee on the condition of the Potomac River front. Senator Ransom was appointed chairman of this committee, a duty which he was well qualified to discharge. In the first place, he had spent most of his life near the Roanoke River, and he knew something about the Roanoke bottoms, and it may safely be said that any man who is capable of handling the Roanoke bottoms will find the Potomac flats an easy problem. In the next place, Senator Ransom fully appreciated the value of a great and magnificent capital, either to State or Nation. He knew what Paris had done for France, what London had done for England, what Berlin had done for Germany, and he knew that a people who would grow and prosper and command the respect and admiration of the world should not begrudge the money which is expended in the beautifying and adornment of their first political city, of their seat of government; in a word, Senator Ransom knew the value of a great and all-pervading national pride. The appreciation which the citizens of Washington City showed to our senior Senator for this action of his was most gratifying to him. In a familiar letter written July 17, 1882, to his life-long friend, Colonel Wm. L. Saunders, he referred to his work on this select committee. "In Washington," he wrote, "I have made a big thing on the Potomac flats. I have captured all Washington beyond question. I can not well tell you how I have taken the city."

Senator Ransom was never deflected from his course in the Senate as a messenger of peace and reconciliation. It was his influence and his vote in the Senate that confirmed Stanley Matthews as a Justice of the Supreme Court. But this action of the Senator brought down on his head the maledictions of many good men at home. Was it not Stanley Matthews who had been sent by Hayes in 1876 as a visiting

statesman to New Orleans, and was he not responsible in part for the defeat of Mr. Tilden in the memorable contest of 1876? Did he not devise ways and means whereby the returns from Louisiana were lost to the Democrats? Ransom examined into these matters and found the appointment to be a good one, and again defied public sentiment at home by his vote to confirm. The next year after Justice Matthews took his seat on the bench, the great case of *United States v. Lee* came up for decision. The question involved was the title to "Arlington," the home of General R. E. Lee. The Court was badly divided. Four Justices, including the Chief Justice, were against the claim of General Lee's children, but five of the Court were with them, and Stanley Matthews' vote restored "Arlington," or its value, to the Lee heirs. We may well imagine that even Senator Ransom's critics now recognized the work of a master.

For a great many years Senator Ransom was Democratic National Committeeman from North Carolina. He was also Chairman of the important Senate Committee on Commerce. Perhaps the most useful services that he rendered his State, along commercial lines, were by virtue of this position. He secured large appropriations for our rivers and harbors, and he contributed very greatly to the commercial supremacy of our chief seaport, Wilmington, by deepening the channel of the Cape Fear River. Step by step he rose in the council chambers of the nation, until finally the greatest honor in the gift of the Senate—an honor attained by no other Southern man since 1861—was accorded to him; he was chosen President *pro tempore* of the Senate and acting Vice-President. Another vote of Senator Ransom showed his character and his independence. In 1893 a fierce panic was raging in the United States. Two remedies for the evil were suggested. They were diametrically opposed. One remedy looked to the free coinage of silver at the rate of 16 to 1, irrespective of the act and conduct of any other nation on this subject. The other remedy looked to the placing of our

country upon the gold standard, along with England, Germany and France. Something must be done at once. The credit of the country was imperiled. An acute panic of enormous proportions was prevailing. Expert financiers declared that the Silver Purchase Clause of the Sherman Act must be repealed at once or the result to our country would be most disastrous and the United States would become Mexicanized. Senator Ransom took his political life in his hand and voted to repeal the Silver Purchase Clause of the Sherman Act, and thereby estranged thousands of friends in his native State. Doubtless this intrepid conduct of our senior Senator again ingratiated him with the Sphinx of the White House, Grover Cleveland.

It is said that Senator Ransom proposed to Senator Vance about this time that they should each take the stump against the Farmers' Alliance, stand boldly by the policy of Mr. Cleveland, and patiently await the result at the ballot box. It is said that Senator Vance, being a consistent believer in the white metal, declined so to do. We know that Walthall and George pursued this course in Mississippi, and that they remained in the Senate until they died. It is interesting to speculate upon the probable result if Vance and Ransom had pursued the course above indicated.

In all the great councils of his party, Ransom took a high place. In the naming of its candidates for President and Vice-President, and in formulating the party creed, he might always be found on the side of conservatism and material progress. The great property interests of the country came to look upon him as one of the safest men at Washington. His friendship for Mr. Bayard, and his earnest desire to see him President of the United States, is well known. After the adjournment of the Senate each election year, Ransom would return to North Carolina and participate actively in the canvass, speaking from every stump assigned him by the chairman of his party, not selecting the large towns, but going into the remote sections and sometimes addressing

small audiences. The length of his speeches was usually about three hours, but no man ever quit the meeting while Ransom was speaking. He was so earnest and dignified, so courteous withal, that men were irresistibly drawn to him; and as for the old soldiers who had fought under him, they came too, to a man, and grasped his hand and brushed away the unbidden tear. In his speeches, even on the stump, he was never known to indulge in personalities. He spoke courteously of his opponents, even those residing in remote States, but in fierce and burning words he would arraign the conduct of the opposing party, and he would bring to bear upon the matters in dispute so many classic references, such praise of the deeds of our ancestors, such hope for his State and his country if his countrymen would but continue to follow in the paths of virtue and of truth, that even his political opponents were dazed by his utterances, captivated by his loftiness and flattered by his attentions. Biennially the great Senator would lay by 100 bales of good middling cotton and send the proceeds to the accredited officials for campaign purposes.

Senator Ransom was the most temperate of men. He absolutely eschewed whiskey and tobacco in every form, and his daily life at Washington was one round of service and of self-abnegation; an orange, a cereal, and a cup of coffee for breakfast; a slight lunch at noon, milk toast and a soft egg at supper sufficed for him, and yet his appearance was so rich, his demeanor so elegant and luxurious, and his views so liberal, that many North Carolinians adjudged him over-indulgent in these things.

Senator Ransom's course in the Senate on more than one occasion had its influence on legislation hostile to the South. Senators and Congressmen of extreme political views had concluded that the new amendments were in the South a nullity and that they must be given effect by means of Federal troops or marshals to guard the polls and enable the freedmen to vote as they chose. When General Hayes was inaugurated President, United States troops had been finally

withdrawn from the South, but bitter and acrimonious debates in Congress continued, and it was openly charged that colored men were cheated of their rights or intimidated and had no voice in public matters. Among other remedies suggested was one to reduce representation in Congress to the basis of the votes actually cast and announced. To all charges of fraud and force Southern Senators and Congressmen had replied that the colored man was ignorant and was not qualified to vote, but that as soon as he was educated and fit for citizenship he should be allowed to vote, and that the white people of the South were then engaged in the duty of educating the colored man for citizenship, and that the whole question was one for adjustment in each individual community. This statement of Southern Senators and Congressmen was, for a long time, taken at its par value and seemed to put the question somewhat at rest, at least so long as the Republicans continued to hold the Presidency. But finally two things occurred which changed the aspect of affairs. In 1884, largely by means of a solid South, the Democrats for the first time since the war elected a Democratic President of the United States, and thereupon Southern men of partisan and extreme views grew bolder in their utterances, declaring that the negro should never vote even if he were educated and qualified, and that the issue was one of race and not of fitness. In 1888 General Harrison defeated Mr. Cleveland for the Presidency, and the Republican party came into power again, and now under the leadership of Senator Hoar, it would make sure that the Democrats would not again elect their president by fraudulent electoral votes from the South! They would remove the handicap of nearly 150 electoral votes from the South going solidly in every election against the Grand Old Party, and this they would accomplish under the guidance of Senator Hoar by means of a Force Bill. I quote from Senator Hoar's Autobiography of Seventy Years: "In December, 1889, the Republican party succeeded to the legislative power in the country for the first

time in fourteen years. Since 1873 there had been a Democratic President for four years, and a Democratic House or Senate or both for the rest of the time. There was a general belief on the part of the Republicans that the House of Representatives, as constituted for fourteen years of that time, and that the Presidency itself when occupied by Mr. Cleveland, represented nothing but usurpation, by which, in large districts of the country, the will of the people had been defeated. There were some faint denials at the time when these claims were made in either House of Congress as to elections in the Southern States. But nobody seems to deny now, that the charges were true. Mr. Senator Tillman, of South Carolina, stated in my hearing in the Senate: 'We took the Government away. We stuffed ballot boxes. We shot them. We are not ashamed of it. The Senator from Wisconsin would have done the same thing. I see it in his eye right now. He would have done it. With that system—force, tissue ballots, etc.,—we got tired ourselves. So we called a Constitutional Convention, and we eliminated, as I said, all of the colored people whom we could under the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments. I want to call your attention to the remarkable change that has come over the spirit of the dream of the Republicans; to remind you, gentlemen of the North, that your slogans of the past—brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God—have gone glimmering down the ages. The brotherhood of man exists no longer, because you shoot negroes in Illinois, when they come in competition with your labor, and we shoot them in South Carolina when they come in competition with us in the matter of elections. You do not love them any better than we do. You used to pretend that you did; but you no longer pretend except to get their votes. You deal with the Filipinos just as you deal with the negroes, only you treat them a heap worse.' No Democrat rose to deny his statement, and, as far as I know, no Democratic paper contradicted it. The Republicans, who had elected President Harrison and

a Republican House in 1888, were agreed, with very few exceptions, as to the duty of providing a remedy for this great wrong."

Senator Hoar actively set about to purge and purify the Southern ballot box! In true New England fashion he consulted not only his associates in the Senate, taking special counsel of Senator Spooner, of Wisconsin, but also conferred freely with friends in the other House. Meantime, the House of Representatives had appointed a select committee to consider and report a bill on this subject. The work of the committee was speedily accomplished. The bill was rapidly put through the House and was sent over to the Senate. It had passed the House. It had the active support of a militant and great party, and it must now become a law. Senator Hoar declared that "it was a very simple measure," and Senator Hoar would make no slip, no mistake this time. He would go himself and see every Republican Senator, and obtain his opinion upon this question in advance. And go he did. And got their opinion, and it was favorable to his simple little bill. And the agreement which they all with one accord—this majority of the entire Senate—did sign with their hands and the original of which Senator Hoar had in his possession up to the day of his death, provided that Mr. Hoar's Federal election law should be taken up the very first day of the next session, and be pressed to the exclusion of all other business. Pursuant to this agreement, Senator Hoar's bill had the right of way at the December session. Day after day, and night after night it was debated. Parliamentary tactics were resorted to. The hope of the South rose and fell. It seemed almost certain that this measure would become a law, and in its train would follow bloodshed, disorder, and demoralization at the South. A motion was finally made to lay it aside for other business, and, strange to relate, the motion prevailed by a bare majority. Senator Hoar could not understand how it all came about. How those Republican Senators who had promised him in writing

to vote for the bill, should have finally voted against it. "I never have known by what process of reasoning they reconciled their action with their word," Senator Hoar sadly remarks on page 156 of his book.

I think I can enlighten Senator Hoar upon this question. This bill was defeated by Matt W. Ransom, and other conservative men in the Senate. He had waited years and years for just such an occasion to serve his people. His votes had often been censured. He had often been misunderstood at home. Often-times he had been accused of truckling to the North, and not standing by the South. He had voted for pensioning the Northern soldiers. He had praised the great Northern dead, as they had passed away. He had mingled in social intercourse freely with the great Senators and their families of the opposite political party. He had declared on Memorial Day, in Raleigh, in May, 1870, "I thank God there are flowers enough in this beautiful land of the South to strew upon the graves of those who fell alike in the Gray and the Blue, and there are hearts pure and large enough and hands gentle and generous enough to perform the kindly duty." And men of the North and men of the West knew that Ransom meant every word that he had said on this subject. And so when the critical time had arrived, and Ransom made his appeal to these men not to pass this iniquitous bill, not to strike down the people of the South, but to leave this matter to them for final settlement, trusting to their honor and trusting to their fairness, his appeal was not made in vain, and the Senators rallied around him, and the bill was defeated. Gorman, of Maryland, was the Democratic leader in the great fight against the enactment of the Force Bill. A few years after all danger had passed, Senator Gorman was at a banquet in New York, when the question of the Force Bill was being discussed in a friendly fashion. It was then that Senator Gorman said that more credit for the defeat of the Force Bill was due to Senator Ransom than to himself and all the other Senators combined. He declared that Senator Ran-

som could not be induced to leave the Senate Chamber either night or day during the pendency of the bill, that he was unwilling to relax his watchfulness for one minute, that he exercised all his powers of argument, persuasion, defiance and threats, to secure votes in opposition to the bill, and prevent the support of it, that he was most resourceful and tactful in arguments, appeals, and parliamentary expedients to prevent the passage of the bill. "Often times during these days," said Senator Gorman, "myself and others felt depressed—almost hopeless—but Ransom never lost faith or courage. At every suggestion of friend or foe of amendment, or amelioration of the provisions of the bill, Senator Ransom refused to listen, insisting that the bill was eternally and intrinsically wrong in principle, and cruel and unjust to his people, and that it must be defeated at all hazards." Senator Gorman likewise declared that but for Ransom, he verily believed that the Force Bill could not have been defeated, that he was the most popular man at the time in the Senate, and that he secured in opposition to the bill some Senators whom none other, perhaps, could have influenced, and induced other Senators to remain neutral who, but for him would have espoused the passage of the bill; when urged to take some rest and admonished that the nervous strain was too great for him, Senator Ransom turned a deaf ear to all appeals, and declared that he would die at his post in opposition to this bill rather than to permit such an infamous measure to be fastened upon his people."

"Hic labor, hoc opus est."

One shudders as he thinks of the results that would have followed in the train of such a Force Bill. If Federal troops had taken part in Southern elections, violence and bloodshed would have ensued. Southern folk are much too hot-blooded for such restraints. So thoroughly did Senator Ransom and his colleagues do the work of opposition, that the Force Bill, and all like bills are, we trust, dead and buried forever.

Of Senator Ransom as a statesman, Goldwin Smith de-

clared that his value to the Southern States was beyond computation, and even Mr. Blaine saw in Ransom such moderation of views and agreeableness of manner, as to give him great influence in the United States Senate.

The fall elections of 1894 were disastrous to the Democratic party. This result was accomplished by a combination of the Republicans and Populists, and Senator Ransom was retired from the Senate in March, 1895. Shortly thereafter he was appointed by President Cleveland Ambassador to Mexico, which position he filled for about two years, resigning on account of the unfavorable climate and of a longing for the Old North State. Returning to the simple pleasures of his country life, he brought with him not only the large salary, which the position of Ambassador to Mexico carries, but also a handsome stipend, greater than his entire salary, as arbitrator in a matter of much consequence. With these large sums of money, and with the proceeds of the sale of several abundant crops, and of timber cut from his bottom lands, he paid his debts, added to his estates, and placed himself in a position of comfort and affluence for the remainder of his days.

Perhaps no citizen of the State was ever more highly esteemed, almost venerated, than was Senator Ransom, from the time he returned from Mexico to the day of his death. Wherever he went admiring throngs followed him, and he was ever spoken of as the Grand Old Roman. Senator Ransom was devotedly attached to his wife and children. He did not connect himself with any church, though he had a sustaining faith in God, and wrote earnest and frequent letters to Mrs. Ransom from the fields of battle, manifesting a desire and intent to enter the communion of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Senator Ransom was a man of superb figure. He was full six feet tall, his weight was about two hundred pounds, his hair and beard, when he was a young man, were very dark. He had a prominent nose, his countenance was noble, and

his eye betokened the worth of the man. His head was much above the average in size. His conversation was clean and chaste. His speeches were lofty and elevated. His illustrations and anecdotes were classic, and truly may it be said of him that his canvass of our State elevated and ennobled her citizenship. Senator Ransom was no such trained lawyer as Senator Badger. He was not a student and a scholar like Senator Graham. He had not the technical knowledge of Senator Haywood, nor was he a popular idol like Senator Vance. But in his influence with the President of the United States, with the Departments, and with his colleagues in the Senate, and in the services which his peculiar talents enabled him to render to the South, he was superior to them all. In fine, Ransom was the Senator—every inch of him. When he took his seat in that august body, he made a fixed resolve, so to conduct himself in his high office that the best thought of the world would approve his conduct, and that no critic could point to North Carolina as a narrow or provincial State.

Senator Ransom was no less fortunate in his death than in his long and brilliant career as orator, soldier, statesman. When Sir Walter Scott had gazed for the last time upon the beautiful Tweed and the hills beyond he turned to his son-in-law, Lockhart, and said: "Be a good man, Lockhart, be a good man," and instantly passed away. Ransom's death was not unlike Scott's. For some months the venerable Senator had not appeared to be in robust health. But it was the way with those heroic men not to complain. So his friends were not apprehensive. His devoted wife and daughter had not returned from their accustomed summer trip to Blowing Rock. Three of his sons were about the quiet country home. A beautiful October day was drawing to its close. The noble Senator had remained indoors during the day, and was sitting on the side of the bed, conversing with his sons when, suddenly, the swift messenger came to him, and the fearless old man, with a bright eye and sus-

taining courage, turned to his boys and said, "Do right, boys, always do right. God bless your mother. I am going." And in an instant, he was indeed gone to his reward.

The day after his death, Joseph P. Caldwell, the Senator's friend and champion, under the editorial caption, "Dead, My Lords and Gentlemen," declared in broken accents that the greatest of North Carolinians had answered the final summons. And Josephus Daniels, who had not always agreed with the Senator, said, editorially, that in many respects, he attained greater reputation than any other citizen who has represented this State in the Federal Congress. Can we, men of Carolina, measure up to this national standard? Shall we, as Ransom did, stand for large and great things? Can we catch the lesson of his life: No man shall advocate principles simply because they are popular. No man shall resort to the cheap tricks of the demagogue to ingratiate himself with the people. No public servant shall vote for a measure, simply because it is popular, but he shall, in accordance with his best judgment, espouse only those equal measures which the mature thought of the world approves, and he shall do all these things quietly, deliberately and unafraid.

"For him, who in a hundred battles stood
Scorning the cannon's mouth,
Grimy with flame and red with foeman's blood,
For thy sweet sake, O South;
Who, wise as brave, yielded his conquered sword
At a vain war's surcease,
And spoke, thy champion still, the statesman's word
In the calm halls of peace;
Who pressed the ruddy wine to thy faint lips,
Where thy torn body lay,
And saw afar time's white in-sailing ships
Bringing a happier day.
Oh, mourn for him, dear land that gave him birth!
Bow low thy sorrowing head!
Let thy seared leaves fall silent on the earth
Whereunder he lies dead!
In field and hall, in valor and in grace,
In wisdom's livery,
Gentle and brave, he moved with knightly pace
A worthy son of thee!"¹

¹Matt W. Ransom. By John Charles McNeill. In "Poems, Merry and Sad."

A Personal Tribute

BY A. H. BOYDEN

State Senator from the Twenty-sixth District.

Mr. Chairman:

Matt W. Ransom was a patriot, an orator, a soldier and a statesman. He was all that, and he was also a God-fearing, Christian gentleman. I am proud to say that he was my warm personal friend, and I am glad this opportunity is afforded me to pay an humble tribute to his honored memory.

I have seen him amid the shock of battle as undaunted, cool and intrepid he sat upon his horse while amid the storm of bullets and plunging iron from the fiery cannon's mouth he led his cheering men to a glorious victory.

I have seen his magnificent presence upon the hustings when for hours he held the listening multitude entranced with his matchless oratory, as with his eloquent tongue he pleaded with his people for the integrity of his State and for Anglo-Saxon supremacy.

I have seen him upon the floor of the United States Senate where for twenty-four years he served his State and country with such conspicuous ability, and where he was recognized as one of the great leaders in that greatest deliberative body on earth. There I have heard his voice in eloquent tones pleading for his stricken Southland, which he loved so much.

His place in history is among the State's immortals, and his friends, and the people of the State honor themselves and honor the State in placing this splendid bust of him in the Capitol among the State's dead statesmen, where it will be an inspiration to the youth of our land to stimulate their ambition to serve their State with love and fidelity as he did.

General Ransom loved his friends, and no man had truer,

more loyal and devoted friends. His soldiers loved him and followed him wherever he led. The people loved him, and honored him with the highest position within the gift of the State. His devotion to North Carolina was unbounded, and there never was a time when he was not ready to make any sacrifice for her honor.

He was an honest man, and his integrity and uprightness in both public and private life, his splendid manners, but simple life, are a glorious heritage to his family and his friends.

Whether in war or in peace, in adversity or prosperity, for nearly half a century he was a leader, a defender and deliverer of our people. He had been with them on the march, at the campfire, in the lurid flames of battle, in famine and pestilence. He suffered with them amid the pangs of cold and hunger.

As he led and guided them then, so when the terrible conflict was over, amid the cruel, sorrowful days of reconstruction, he guided and led them through a wilderness of woes back to freedom and peace, to a government of the people by the people and for the people.

While he may have had deep and powerful impulses and resentments at times, his great heart always beat in tender sympathy and charity for the poor, the downtrodden and oppressed.

His magnanimity and sense of justice were deep and strong, and his kindly nature as sweet and tender as a woman's.

If I could only do this great, good man, my friend, justice; if I could only portray, as his eloquent tongue could, his life and character and his virtues, it would give me supreme joy.

But his great deeds, his life and his virtues are enshrined in the hearts of a brave and affectionate people.

"When he died he left a lofty name,
A light, a landmark on the cliffs of fame."

Senator Ransom as a Private Citizen

BY B. S. GAY

Representative from Northampton County.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As the representative here of the good people of Northampton County, the home of General Ransom, and as a member of the House of Representatives, I thank the Historical Commission for the splendid bust of the soldier, statesman, and devoted patriot, which is an expression of your own public spirited patriotism, your appreciation of his great qualities of mind and soul, and of his noble deeds in war and in peace, and of your love of the "True, the Beautiful and the Good." I shall ever remember with pride that I was so honored as to participate, although so feebly, with the statesmen and orators who have met here to do honor to him, who, while living, "crowned himself with living bays."

You have been told in eloquent words, as only the scholar and orator could tell, of his heroic deeds in times that tried men's souls; of his bravery and moral courage in times of peace no less than in times of war; and of his devotion to duty, which nerved him to advocate the interests of his people, as he saw them, against their opinions sometimes, unawed by impending political and financial ruin. It has been recited to you how he concentrated all his powers of mind and soul, while United States Senator, to the bringing about of a reconciliation between the lately hostile sections for the salvation of his own loved Southland, and the glory of the whole country. You have been told how, by his wisdom, his tact, and his magnetic influence he, as no other man could have done, prevented the enactment of the Force Bill, which would probably have precipitated another war between the States, and would certainly have prolonged the horrors of sectional discord for generations. You

have been told how, when the best men of the State were incarcerated, and were to be convicted without law, by the infamous Kirk, and the writ of *habeas corpus* was powerless, and the State "Judiciary was exhausted" in fact, the wisest and best lawyers and statesmen looked to Ransom as the only Moses who could solve the seemingly insolvable problem, and how he, as ever, measured up to the great occasion, and with the persuasive powers, the persistency, and the magnetism which he only possessed, influenced Judge Brooks, of the Federal Court, to have the writ enforced, and thereby established the authority of law and civil government in North Carolina, and drove the gamblers and money changers out of the temple of government. Neither is it in my province to relate to you that, on another occasion, in 1902, when the revenues of the State were inadequate to the appropriations made for the public schools, and when there was no authority from the Legislature to supply the deficiency, and it seemed that the public schools must be closed, how that most unselfish of patriots, the superb Aycock, then governor of the State, whose magnificent powers of soul and mind were consecrated to the uplift of his people, called together the wise men of the State to see if some way could not be devised whereby the honor of the State might be preserved, and the doors of the public schools might be kept open to the children of the State. I say it is not my part to tell you that the noble Ransom came then again to the rescue of the State, and proposed to be one of fifty to give \$250,000 to keep the schools open; and when that could not be, how he authorized the Governor to draw on him for \$5,000 for that purpose, declaring that the schools *should not close*,—yet these are facts! These themes were for stronger men, and you know how well they have done their part in your hearing to-night.

It becomes me to tell you of General Ransom as the people at his home knew him, and as I knew him. In the few minutes which have been kindly allotted to me, I can but

touch upon some few of his acts, but I hope these will show you the underlying principles which guided and controlled his life.

While he yet resided in his native county of Warren, he had wooed and won Miss Pattie Exum, one of the most famous belles of Northampton, a county still noted for her beautiful and splendid women. She was cultured, modest, pure—a model Southern young woman—and no other civilization has produced such. They were married in 1853, while he was living in Warren, his native county. In 1856 they moved to Northampton County, and lived on her magnificent Roanoke farm “Verona,” five miles from Jackson. Mrs. Ransom was the owner of broad acres of Roanoke lands, and a large number of negroes, and of teams, etc., which she had inherited. Besides the staple crops of cotton and corn, to which these fertile lands were so well adapted, they had great pastures of clover and grasses on which roamed brood mares and colts, Jersey cows and calves, and sheep and frisking lambs. Mrs. Ransom had a drove of one hundred turkeys, and was a model housekeeper. Is it strange that they loved this spot so well? It is now hallowed ground, for in it was buried General Ransom, beside his brilliant and noble son, Thomas R. Ransom, who was only permitted to view the Canaan of Fame, and who died a few years before his father, between whom was a most beautiful attachment. Here too, was buried their first born, a beautiful little girl, about whom he used to write so sweetly from the camp in the tender letters to Mrs. Ransom. These letters are models, breathing tenderest love, noblest ambition, and deepest gratitude and strongest trust in God.

Mrs. Ransom was in entire sympathy with her noble husband, and throughout their married life there was a mutual devotion and unity of purpose. General Ransom was always gallant, gentle, and devoted to her, even up to his death. Dr. H. W. Lewis, of Jackson, their family physician, who was frequently in their home, and others, have often told me

of this beautiful relationship. They both loved the country, and the home life. They were both devoted to their children, and desired them educated at the home schools and at Horner's, and at the State University. For these reasons (and for a long time their financial condition would have prevented it) Mrs. Ransom never lived in Washington.

In 1867 he was farming very largely. While labor at that time was cheap, all the other expenses were very great. Corn sold for \$7 or \$8 per barrel; flour for \$15, and Western meat for 20 cents per pound; and Peruvian guano, the only kind used then, sold for \$80 per ton. Horses were also proportionately high. General Ransom expected to make 500 bales of lint cotton; on account of the extremely wet June and July and August, and the unusually early frosts, he did not make 50 bales. His was the experience of many other Roanoke farmers. The result was that he lost nearly everything but Mrs. Ransom's land. Mrs. Ransom told me a few days ago that they had to deny themselves sugar and coffee the whole winter of 1867. Nothing daunted, he rented a home in Garysburg, moved his family there, and opened a law office across the Roanoke River at Weldon, where he established a lucrative practice which he retained so long as he could attend to it, for two or three years. But the home on the farm, and farm life were irresistibly attractive to him, and he could not but divide his time there. Born and reared on his father's farm, near the famous Shocco Springs, in Warren County, where the sweetest waters gushed from shaded springs at the foot of the rich, red clay hills, overflowing into the murmuring brooklets, where man and beast were refreshed; where the hillsides were carpeted with blossoming clover and green pastures, on which horses and cows and sheep grazed and colts and calves and lambs gamboled; where the gentle breezes rolled the golden wheat fields into graceful ocean-like waves; where giant oaks bravely stood guard over the yet unconquered forests; where the air was fragrant with the perfume of wild honeysuckle, and yellow

jessamine and apple blossoms; where the mocking bird sang so sweetly, and the "cock's shrill clarion," and deep bass of the big bullfrog, and the bob-white's tenor, and merry whistle and song of the happy plowboy made a grand chorus of melody; and where, later on, the lovely blossoms developed into blushing peaches, golden apples, luscious grapes and the fleecy cotton and "the full corn in the ear," as the reward of labor and skill, and the barns were filled with corn and wheat—it was amid such scenes and surroundings as these, where surely the "land flowed with milk and honey" that Matt W. Ransom grew up from infancy to manhood. Is it any wonder that he always thereafter so loved the simple home-life on the farm? Is it any wonder that the teeming ground, the generous Roanoke lands, were so attractive to him? These memories never faded, and, as in all cases,

"Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channel deeper wear."

Here he communed with nature and imbibed that deep reference for nature's God. Amid such scenes, drinking the health-giving waters and inhaling the pure air was developed that kingly form, that masterful intellect and breadth of soul which sympathized with all creatures that could love and suffer. Here he learned from the majestic and silent oaks to brave all assaults, whether, as he believed, from mistaken friends or bitter foes, and keep silent, awaiting vindication by time and cooler reason, having supreme faith in the justice of his cause.

Like the noble old Roman, Nathaniel Macon, his grand-uncle, he loved the soil, the simple life of the farm, and he loved fine cattle and had a great weakness for splendid horses. When he did not have one cent to spare, he could not resist the purchase of the famous stallion "Red Dick," for \$1,200. And Mrs. Ransom, with clearer judgment on such matters, uncomplainingly yielded to the gratification of this weakness.

You have been told about his having been elected to the United States Senate to fill the term for which Governor Vance had been elected, but which his unremoved disabilities prevented him from serving, but you have not been told that General Ransom equally divided with Governor Vance the salary of \$5,000 allowed and paid him the first year of this term. Yet such was the fact, and Governor Vance, soon after his inauguration as Governor, when it was suggested that influence would be exerted to have him elected United States Senator by the Legislature, to succeed General Ransom, answered that he would not oppose Ransom, that he was his friend; that Ransom had been paid the salary for the first year of the term, and equally divided it with him at a time when it amounted to something to him, and that Ransom did this without solicitation. They were both poor men then. Very few people ever knew of this generous act. His sympathies were broad as his thoughts were lofty. An incident, related by his friend and kinsman, Dr. L. J. Picot, (and incorporated in the valuable and splendid memorial address of Colonel W. H. S. Burgwyn), illustrates this phase:

He rode upon a file of soldiers taking a prisoner to be shot. He inquired the cause, and finding that, upon being refused a furlough to spend one night with his wife and children, only a short distance from the camp, the soldier had determined to see them once more, and return in time for duty; but his absence was detected, and he was forthwith captured, convicted of desertion and sentenced to be shot therefor. General Ransom's sympathies were enlisted. He told the escort not to execute the order until his return. Spurring his horse, in a few minutes he had returned from General Lee's headquarters, his horse in full gallop, waving the pardon which he had obtained. As Colonel Burgwyn remarks, "it is of pathetic interest to know that, on the next day that soldier was killed in the forefront of battle by a bullet piercing his heart." Is it any wonder that his soldiers loved and

almost worshipped him? I have met many of his soldiers at home and in the far western part of the State, but I have never seen one of them that was not devoted to him. He shared with them all the hardships of war and camp 'life, and took a personal interest in each of them. He opened his bosom to his soldiers and bared his breast to the enemy. He exposed himself and led them in the thickest of the fight.

In the battle of Plymouth, pontoon bridges had been arranged for the crossing of Conley Creek by his infantry, in the attack, and he was riding horse-back. His horse got stuck in the mud in the creek while he was leading the charge. He immediately jumped over the horse's head, pulled himself across the creek—he couldn't swim—and led the charge on foot, and carried the position. The great victory did not cause him to forget his faithful but unfortunate steed, and, so soon as he could he had a squad of men to prize him out of the mud alive, and afterwards returned him to the friend who had loaned him to him, Mr. Day, of Halifax, the father of the brilliant Captain W. H. Day. This incident was also told me by Dr. Picot. General Ransom was a true North Carolinian of the old school—he did not parade his gallant or generous acts, and only those very near him ever learned of them from him.

'Twas the same in times of peace. On one occasion, about 1868, in Weldon, seven hundred men, many of them clad in second-hand Federal uniforms, and with banners and some sabers, led by negroes who had served in the Union army, were parading the streets, over-awing the people, and inflaming the negroes generally. The situation was serious and the white people dreaded the outcome. When the negroes were at the height of their orgies, General Ransom came up and the white men crowded around him for counsel and leadership. He soon took matters in charge, and with only two men went up to the leader, some considerable distance off. His commanding figure and utter disregard of

their arms, organization and numbers carried consternation and in a few minutes they had disbanded and scattered and felt relieved that he was so lenient to them.

I do not believe, after reviewing his record in the United States Senate and on all occasions, seeing how he had, in the most trying crises and against obstacles insurmountable to all others, he achieved his object by ways impossible to any but himself, that the world has ever produced a greater diplomat. He knew and respected himself—that gave him poise and made him a leader. He knew and respected and sympathized with others—that made him a democrat.

But I have digressed. Let us come back to Northampton and to his life as a private citizen and farmer, the largest and most successful farmer—cotton raiser, at least, in North Carolina.

I am sure he loaned or gave a hundred horses and mules to poor deserving farmers in Northampton County at different times during many years, even when he himself had not much else but horses. I have learned of scores of such cases—but not ever directly or indirectly from him. He never denied a worthy Confederate soldier or poor neighbor. I have learned from others that he would give from \$10 to \$50 to relieve the sufferings of old, dependent friends, or to promote the worthy children of friends. His heart and his purse were in quick sympathy with worthy objects of charity, and institutions devoted to the elevation of the youth of the land.

On the Roanoke farms there were from 500 to 1,000 souls, mostly negroes, but he knew them all, and in their sickness he would send or carry to them comforts, and provided his own family physician to attend them, with directions to call upon him for such things as they might need for comfort or cure. He was as truly a patriarch as was Abraham. His magnetism and tact were displayed here and were as effective in controlling his overseers and laborers and tenants as in leading men in the higher walks of life. They knew that if

they did reasonably well their part that "Mars General" would provide the physician in sickness and the lawyer when necessary to defend them in the courts. He made from 1,000 to 1,500 bales of cotton each year, and made great profits from his farming. He borrowed money and invested in Roanoke farms, whenever they were sold, and those lands greatly enhanced in value, and when he died he owned, perhaps, more than 25,000 acres of magnificent Roanoke lands.

It required a genius for affairs to profitably manage these lands with such laborers and tenants as were available; yet, with the aid of his sons, who inherited many of his fine qualities, he made a great success.

I was at his funeral at his home where he had lived for half a century. There were gathered there scores of distinguished men from all parts of the State, and from other States, and hundreds of his neighbors and friends and admirers, and hundreds of the negroes from his plantations—all subdued by the solemnity of the occasion, sorrow expressed in every countenance. It was hard for many to realize that he could be taken off and still the world go on its normal way. They had lost a friend who never failed them, a leader whom they could always trust. The sight was pathetic. The end had come. His kingly form will never more be seen—that wonderful voice which so often called the people to duty, that unsurpassed art of the diplomat and that magnetism will nevermore be heard or seen or felt. A grand equestrian statue of him, clad in his Confederate uniform and mounted on his magnificent stallion, Ion, and placed on these Capitol grounds, and a life size statue, carved by the most cunning sculptor and placed in Statuary Hall in the group with the immortal Lee and the great educator and statesman, J. L. M. Curry, with whom he wrought and whose admiration he had won, and beside that other grandest of men, Zebulon B. Vance, would be a fitting expression of a grateful people for his brave deeds and unselfish sacrifices for his loved State and Southland, and would do honor to

the State, and would perpetuate the memory of the superb form and manly features of him who was a king among men. North Carolina can not do too much for him who did so much for her. But the marble will crumble into dust before the influence of his brave life shall have ended.

Before closing, let me call your attention to his last words. When he knew that his mission had ended, and he had received a sudden dispatch to report to the Heavenly Father, his lips were forever closed after uttering, "Do right, boys, always do right!" And then his prayer for the partner in all his ambitions, sorrows and triumphs—"God bless your mother. I am going." It was so natural. In all supreme moments he forgot himself, and lived for those he loved so well—his State and his people.

Address of Presentation

BY J. BRYAN GRIMES

Chairman of the North Carolina Historical Commission.

Your Excellency:

This evening we lift the veil and look upon the face of him whom all Carolinians knew and loved. It is the image of the scholar, the orator, the soldier, the statesman, the patriot who loved the South as he loved his life, and loved North Carolina even more than the South—the peerless Ransom!

Ransom, a name written by fame's crimsoned pen upon many a field made sacred to us by Carolina valor and laved in Carolina blood.

Ransom, a name that towered as the Gibraltar of courage and right when weaklings cowered and hope had fled, when the "Old Mother State" lay prostrate, violated by the alien and betrayed by degenerate sons.

Ransom, a name made great as the defender of the South when the raging seas of hate, sectionalism, destruction and reconstruction, beating with relentless fury, threatened to engulf and destroy our civilization.

Ransom, a name that for twenty-five years was acclaimed by all the people of all this country as that of the great American who stood for the Constitution and for the inalienable rights of a stricken people.

Ransom, a name that brings to mind the best traditions of the scholarship and chivalry of the old South.

In his early manhood, Matt W. Ransom consecrated himself to the welfare of his people, and for half a century the virtues, talents and abilities of this great man shone, conspicuous and resplendent, in the service of his State and the Southland.

It is peculiarly fitting that his admiring fellow-countrymen should attest their love for him by erecting this beautiful and

grateful tribute to his worth, and representing them and the North Carolina Historical Commission, I have the honor to tender to you for the State of North Carolina this heroic bust of that heroic man.

Address of Acceptance

BY HON. W. W. KITCHIN

Governor of North Carolina.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

In behalf of the people of North Carolina who loved him so well and honored him so greatly, I am glad to accept from the State Historical Commission this marble bust of the late Matt Whitaker Ransom.

Of his services in war and in peace, at the bar, on the field of battle, on the hustings, in the United States Senate, of his great ability, his wise statesmanship, his intrepid courage, his unsurpassed eloquence, his excellent diplomacy, his far-reaching patriotism, his handsome personality, it is not for me to speak, for well-selected orators have with striking ability portrayed all these splendid qualities to you. The lawyer, the soldier, the planter, the public official, the patriot, find in his life the type of American citizenship to be revered and emulated. He added dignity, wisdom and luster to the greatest deliberative body of the world, in which sat Blaine, Conkling, Hoar, Ingalls, Carpenter, Bayard, Thurman, Vest, Vance, Voorhees, Lamar, Garland, Daniel, and others of that galaxy of senatorial giants. North Carolina is justly proud of him. His bust will adorn the rotunda of this Capitol, where his admiring countrymen shall be forever reminded of his virtues and his triumphs.

